



2520 E Franklin St, Suite 4  
 Pierre, South Dakota 57501  
 605.773.6369 1-800-265-9684  
[dhs.sd.gov/cdd.aspx](http://dhs.sd.gov/cdd.aspx)

**Minutes of Meeting  
 November 3, 2023**

**Zoom**

Members Present:

Barb Abeln  
 Katie Armstrong  
 Bob “Skippy” Blechinger  
 Toni Feist  
 Bernie Grimme  
 Val Husby  
 Tania Kostal

Jessie Kuechenmeister  
 Eric Kurtz  
 Keath Rick  
 Brenda Smith  
 Cole Uecker  
 Melanie Westin  
 Sara Valle

Others Attending:

Marlys Feist

Arlene Poncelet

INTRODUCTIONS

Sara Valle, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. The mission statement was read, and the meeting agreements were reviewed.

All members were asked to introduce themselves and their role on the Council as well as share 1-2 things they are passionate about for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Passions included: person-centered thinking, Special Olympics, people have a good quality of life, self-advocacy, people have choices and opportunities (community employment, services across agencies, schools), inclusion and integration, being a voice

for people with disabilities, supporting parents and advocating, health equity and access in community, social justice, families respected for their many roles, helping people with disabilities understand their rights and REAL quality of life (friendships, work, etc.).

APPROVE AGENDA & MINUTES

Toni Feist made a motion, seconded by Cole Uecker, to approve the agenda adding the Policy discussion for item 13. Motion passed.

Bernie Grimme made a motion, seconded by Bob “Skippy” Blechinger, to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2023, meeting. Motion passed.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT & RATIFY ACTIONS

Sara reviewed the Executive Committee’s actions at their meeting and recommendations as follows:

- a. SD Parent Connection, \$1,000 sponsorship approved for printing CDC Growth Charts

Bob “Skippy” Blechinger made a motion, seconded by Cole Uecker, to approve the report of the Executive Committee meeting held October 31, 2023. Motion passed.

Bernie Grimme made a motion, seconded by Brenda Smith, to ratify the actions of the Executive Committee. Motion passed.

BUDGET UPDATE

Arlene Poncelet reviewed the Information Budget that she prepared. Arlene shared that news about the federal budget continues with the House budget showing a 29% cut for DD Councils while the Senate budget shows level funding. The current Continuing Resolution goes thru November 17, 2023. For this budget update, Arlene used a 9% cut for FFY24 that starts on October 1, 2023. This showed available funds from FFY23 and

FFY24 as \$247,678.98 (assuming proposals at today's meeting are approved). Bernie Grimme made a motion, seconded by Skippy Blechinger, to approve the report as presented. Motion passed.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Arlene shared a couple of thank you cards received. The Governors Awards Ceremony was held on Monday and Sandy Hook received the Distinguished Service Award. Arlene reminded Council members that if they have anyone to nominate for any of the awards, she is available to assist with the nomination form.

The SD Conference on Developmental Disabilities was held in early September. There were almost 300 people in attendance, and it was a great event.

There are a couple of Legislative Committee meetings coming up that may be of interest to Council members. The Government Operations and Audit Committee will be discussing the Dakota at Home program on November 8. The Appropriations Committee will be hearing the results of the Family Support 360 and Shared Living Review on November 13 at 1 p.m.

Arlene has been contacted by the director for the North Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities to have a discussion about activities they are considering in the area of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and possible collaboration.

A Questions & Answers document from the US Dept. of Justice Civil Rights Division on the Application of the ADA's Integration Mandate and Olmstead v. L.C. to Employment and Day Services for People with Disabilities has been made available. Also, the US Dept. of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights published a proposed update to the regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Arlene provided an update on the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identify (SOGI) questions that have been added to the participant data collected on all individuals with disabilities and family members who participate in Council activities. The list of questions has been changed to only add 3 with fewer options for each. Every question includes “I prefer not to answer” as an option.

Arlene included on the Boards & Commissions Portal documents, the report entitled, “Continuing the Conversation: A National Agenda for Supporting Families with a Member with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities”. Council member Brenda Smith participated in the discussions that led to the document. Brenda encouraged everyone to look at the report and the recommendations.

One item that Arlene missed having the Executive Committee review was a \$500 sponsorship for the SD NAMI Conference held in September. She asked that the council make a motion for this activity. Bernie Grimme made a motion, seconded by Bob “Skippy” Blechinger, to approve the SD NAMI Conference sponsorship in the amount of \$500. Motion passed.

### GRANT REVIEW PROCESS

Arlene reviewed the process for reviewing grant applications.

### GRANT APPLICATION – Leadership Development for Self-Advocates and Family Members, Disability Rights South Dakota

Mary Kay Budmayr provided an overview of the Partners in Policymaking and SD Advocates for Change accomplishments and activities for the coming year.

Bob “Skippy” Blechinger made a motion, seconded by Jessie Kuechenmeister, to approve federal funding in the amount of \$210,000 for the Leadership Development grant. Motion passed 14-0 with Cole Uecker abstaining.

### SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sara began with a quick review of the timeline that Arlene created for the Council as far as activities at meetings and between meetings. There was some discussion regarding the amount of time needed to train a new person, having 2 Council staff, getting examples from other states for job descriptions, etc. The Council asked Arlene to prepare a list of what she works on by month or annually, and to start creating a list of her major contacts. Council members volunteering to start working on the job description – Erik Kurtz, Brenda Smith and Jessie Kuechenmeister.

### SOUTH DAKOTA IDD-MH SERVICE SYSTEM EVALUATION

Arlene invited all Council members to participate on December 1 at 2 p.m. in a virtual session by the National Center for START Services to share the assessment and recommendations. Arlene was asked if there would be other times to participate and Arlene indicated that the presentation would be recorded so that it could be posted for others to watch later.

### POLICY – ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Arlene shared that when the Council was completing its review of policies a couple of years ago, that this policy was missed in the final approval process. Arlene reviewed the changes suggested. Brenda Smith made a motion, seconded by Jessie Kuechenmeister, to approve the policy as discussed. Motion passed.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Sara and Arlene reviewed the roles of the officers. Arlene reminded members that the Chair and Vice Chair are two-year terms and can only be held by people with developmental disabilities and family members/guardians. The Member-at-

Large is a one-year term, a person can serve 2 terms and is open to anyone on the Council.

Sara Valle nominated Val Husby to be the Chair.  
Brenda Smith nominated Sara Valle to be the Vice Chair.  
Toni Feist nominated Caryn Johnson to be the Member-at-Large.

Bob “Skippy” Blechinger made a motion, seconded by Jessie Kuechenmeister that this slate of officers be approved. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public had any comments.

Sara Valle shared that her daughter (why she is on the Council) has graduated from the Dakota Wesleyan University Learn & Earn program with an associate degree in business.

Katie Armstrong shared that she will be participating in the Special Olympics Unified Bowling Tournament next week.

Brenda and Derek Smith shared that Derek will be presenting at the NASDDDS Conference (National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services) later this month in Washington, DC.

Val Husby shared that her son Warrior will be participating in a Fun Run at his school this afternoon.

Next Meeting

Arlene will send a poll for some dates in January and February.

Adjourn

Tania Kostal made a motion, seconded by Wendy Trujillo, to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m. Motion passed.